THE EYE:

BY OBADIAH OPTIC.

——*VARIOUS OBJECTS FROM THE SENSE,*
VARIOUSLY REPRESENTING. MILTON.

Vol. II.] *THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER* 1, 1808. [No. 9.

Γνωθι σεαυτόν. SOLON.
Know thyself.

THE page of revelation, and the volume of nature, teach one and the same lesson, that the world is governed by an infinitely wise and good BEING, who delights in the happiness of the creatures he has called into existence.

For this purpose, he has laid open every path that leads to felicity, and diffused himself through all his works, that so man might, by considering the excellence, utility and beauty there exhibited, be induced to love the divine AUTHOR.

If the doctrine advanced by deistical writers were true, if there were less happiness than misery in the world, if vice predominated over virtue, and our pains exceeded our pleasures, they might come boldly forward, and challenge us to prove that the world is under the superintendence of a BEING infinitely good as well as infinitely powerful. But if this be not the case, if happiness predominates, if the sweets and comforts of life abound, if even our pains have a tendency to promote our felicity, then it will follow, that man is not that wretched creature which TIMON has depicted him to be, that he has no right either to 'hang himself,' nor wish 'that he was an oyster!'

"See man in wealth, says TIMON, he knows not how to use it—he squanders his riches on the profligate and vicious, while the needy mendicant is denied the crumbs that fall from his table; he rolls in a splendid equipage, regardless of every virtue, and consults his discernment how he may best appear an object of admiration to the poor, and a mark of envy to his equals in fortune. He attains this pitch of greatness by fraud and dishonesty, and leaves no vice unpractised by which he

may surcharge his coffers: He cares nothing for his fellow creatures, and refuses to relieve their miseries; if he is indebted for his prosperity to friendship—gratitude knows no place in his heart. Degraded man; blush for thy crimes—go hang thyself!" Perhaps a paragraph could scarcely be written more replete with error; and if it were true, instead of having our souls inflamed with gratitude and love towards the AUTHOR of our mercies; disappointment, anguish and despair would be ours; the sweet voice of heaven-born religion would be for ever silent; no trace of goodness could be seen, and man would be led to suppose, that the world was made and governed by a being delighting in scenes of misery and torment! But this is not the case, therefore we rejoice, and the tear is wiped from the sympathising eye. We acknowledge man is not perfect—degeneracy has taken possession of the human family; but still he is like a magnificent building in ruins; some noble traits appear, and so many, that you may easily discern from what origin he sprung: Now and then such a creature, as TIMON has described, may rise up to torment his fellow creatures, but the thing is not common. A CALIGULA is not found in every century, and perhaps we may never again in the annals of time hear of a ROBESPIERE—men engage in wars, and thousands are slain in the field of battle, but SUWARROWS are rare, who murder the infant, the aged and infirm in cold blood, as was done at *Ishmael*—cities are taken after direful contests, but not in a thousand years do we find that those who nobly defended them are *harrowed* to pieces with harrows of iron, or roasted in lime-kilns. To argue therefore, that man has an unfeeling heart, is as disgraceful to the historian as it is degrading to the philosopher: Man is a sympathising animal—he weeps with those who weep, he shares in their joys, he participates in their pleasures, and he is happy, even in the midst of personal troubles, to view the happiness of others.

One would imagine that TIMON had uttered his incoherent raphsody in the environs of London, Dublin, or Paris, where mendicants exhibit scenes of distress at almost every corner—but surely in Philadelphia, where not an *individual* is reduced to the *necessity* of begging, where ample provision is made for the poor of all descriptions, it is departing from the strict line of veracity, to say that the "mendicant is denied the crumbs." Now and then perhaps a man may rise to wealth by *fraud*, but every candid observer must allow that

the thing is rare; and if he, when thus enriched, should practise every vice, if he should be regardless of every virtue, if gratitude could know no place in his heart, he would be a monster, society would view him as they would a wild beast; with them he could not associate, like NEBUCHADNEZZER, he would have to fly from his grandeur and make his dwelling with the beasts of the field.

I do not intend to enter fully into the argument respecting the dignity of man; independently, he has none; all that he hath is derived—and O how bountifully has he received! to prove this would be only refering to the daily experience of every man, and in my opinion, few can be found who will not allow that they are comparatively *happy:* And none but a maniac can say 'I hate the name of man.' It is a principle impressed upon our nature so deeply, that it cannot be erased, that man is a social being—he loves his kind, to him the name of *man* is dear; a wretch may degrade himself, injure society, break, as far as in his power, the social tie, and disturb the peace of society, but still man is not degraded, it is the individual.

Let TIMON think, pause, and retract: The author of our religion, he of whom the world was not worthy, calls himself the SON of MAN, yet TIMON hates the name—O shame, where is thy blush!—

SHAKSPEARE, that great judge of human nature, gives us a view of man that ought to put all such partial viewers as TIMON to silence for ever, "What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals." *Hamlet, act 2d. scene 2d.*

Indeed, it is not in our power to hate man; we are led by instinct to love him; we are induced by our wants and weaknesses to cleave close to him and cultivate his acquaintance; we must cease to be rational before we hate society—nay, no man in the true enjoyment of his mental powers, can hate the name of any thing: He who made all things, made them very good; the beast, the bird, fish, insect, are all excellent in their kind, they are links of that vast chain whose end in minuteness mocks our search, and whose extremity in greatness the archangels cannot discover. Away with misanthophy—no more let it disgrace our pages, let our sentiments always reecho "Peace on earth and good will towards men."

OBADIAH OPTIC.

[L. of C.

ORIGINAL.

THE HISTORY OF ROBERT RUSTIC.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

"*Father and I.*" Pater et Ego.

I BEG my courteous reader will fix himself in his chair, in the most easy and patience-inspiring attitude (I would recommend a recumbent posture, as his amusement may prove soporific) while he peruses the following pages devoted to an important, and to *me*, agreeable article of modern biography.

I often lament the situations of our authors when they are under the disagreeable necessity of writing on the delicate subject of themselves. They complain wonderfully indeed, but, like those enthusiasts, in some countries, who inflict various painful mortifications on themselves for their own good; so such authors, as it is for their own benefit, bear it with fortitude. How few there are who do not say something of themselves—and I candidly confess I feel an enthusiastic pleasure in a theme underrated so unjustly—In writing on this innocent subject too, no injury or scandal is ever attempted—but only make it *thou* or *he*—then you have scandal, abuse, murder, and even falsehood, which it is to be taken for granted never shades the pages of one's own history, when written by *himself*.

After thus prefacing, I proceed to inform you, I was born in this free country and born free too, tho' many hundred miles distant from the seat of government. There was a wonderful hubbub and rejoicing with my father, mother and relations, on the important epoch of my birth, but no extraordinary signs appeared in sea, air, or earth: The spring-clad hills, the wildly meandering streams, and green groves were not gratulant; I might indeed construe an eclipse of the sun some years before, as well as several since my birth, together with some dozens of lunar eclipses, into the sympathising workings of nature on the occasion: But alas! the most prevalent opinion is, that they should be attributed to BUONAPARTE.—To be brief, I will dismiss the account of my infancy by simply observing, that my mother informs me, I was famous for crying uncommonly loud, discovered an extraordinary fondness for the breast, made it my favourite amusement, and drew from it my greatest portion of pleasure; and

moreover, that I had a great liking to sugar and other sweet things.

As soon as my father thought me old enough, he sent me to school: His highest wish, bounded by this low earth was, that I should be well educated. He saw very early I was born to be a great man, and in every thing I said or did he discovered the embryo germ of genius.—My father was illiterate, having never read more than his own library, which by the bye was better than many possessed by those of greater learning, consisting of a family bible and psalm book. But he had his own opinions, by which he was always ruled—he determined to let my mind choose its own course; never to force a profession or study on it which did not suit its particular cast; moreover, he thought that every man was moulded for some particular pursuit, and that the only method to make men eminent in their several occupations, was to hit on the right one; being a true believer in this theory, his whole attention was occupied in studying my propensities and 'turns,' as he called them—he eyed me like a hawk, pondered my words, and translated my actions as STERNE sometimes did the physiognomy of the company he was in.

As soon as I could read and write, so impatient was he to make a great man of me, that he pshaw'd and hooted the English language as insignificant and useless for a great man, and hurried me away to a latin and greek school, fifteen miles from home. I visited him once a month, and a worrying time I had with him.——Except at county-court bars, he had never heard a word of latin, and so much did it tickle his fancy, that my time was wholly occupied in latinizing English words for him, coining many of them myself, to all which I carefully gave the sonorous terminations of *bus* and *ibus*. The 'comical sounds' of the latin words delighted him so amazingly, that in one month, his conversations at table were as much stuffed with latin as the books of our modern pedantic authors.

The time now arrived that my father, to his great joy, discovered the 'turn' of my genius—At school the students delivered a speech once a month—I was blessed with a good quantum of effrontery, had a stentorian voice (the two great recommendatory qualities of lawyers) and consequently, performed admirably; unfortunately I chanced to speak before my father—O! how he was delighted to see my dear little lips move in pronouncing words which neither he nor myself

understood, and then a gesture threw him into such ecstasies that he interrupted my harangue. He plainly saw I was cut out for a lawyer; and immediately dubbed me with the title, saying he was determined I should study the law.

I never paid my father a visit after that time, but my relations flocked to see me and hear me speak, all brought me presents; some pennies, some cakes and some sweetmeats, with the latter my stomach was so cloyed that I loathed their fees, as I suppose many lawyers' consciences do when, as I was, they are so dearly paid for nothing, with this difference, that their consciences are more callous than my young stomach was.

I had just toiled through Ovid, when my father, impatient to make a lawyer of me, took me from school and placed me with that eminent counsellor, LOQUAX—I was just fifteen years old; did not understand a word I read, became idle, and at last really sick.—My father concluded the law did not suit my 'turn,' and took me home for a while: But, to give me a better chance of recovery, sent me to live with a physician, in a little village six miles distant, where he thought it impossible for me to die. He now visited me daily, and frequently was surprised to hear me call the latin names of the medicines I was surrounded with—and then to see me swallow down jalap, rhubarb and other nauseous doses without a wry face, was to him ominous of some 'turn'—in truth, he began to discover in me evident symptoms of a medical genius: He mistook my pining melancholy air for natural profound gravity, which he thought was as necessary for a doctor, as effrontery and a loud voice was for a lawyer.

So, having discovered my second 'turn,' and contorted and distorted every thing I said or did to suit the turn of his theory, and (with about as much plausibility as I have known great speculative philosophers invert and retrograde the very laws of nature to fit their theories) he resolved to *turn* me into a physician:—As my constitution was weakly, he said I could doctor myself, without the expence of any other physician—a strange argument!—he thought I should learn the laborious and difficult profession of doctor—he had his own opinion, and his will followed none else.

I got well, and read and slept about six months over dry, unintelligible medical authors, the names even of which I do not recollect. I was not at all pleased with the study of medicine or with my professor, whose name was SALVADOR—he

might be very properly compared to a thermometer—every change of the weather wrought a revolution, not only in the old doctor's corporeal, but mental system—and his animal *spirits* descended and ascended as regularly as the spirits of wine or mercury rises and falls in Fareignheit's thermometer—in cold weather, he was cool; at the temperate degree he was so; and I have often seen him up to the *boiling* point—when it was calm, clear weather, he was quite serene and cheerful; but in a cloudy day you would infallibly hear him *thunder*—as to his corporeal system it was as infallible as a weather-cock—and frequently his gouty exacerbations, and twinging corns, were signals to the neighbouring farmers to secure their wheat and hay from impending rains—woe to his family when he was thus attacked by the combined forces of gout and weather; he was a true thunder-storm, and big and little, his wife not excepted, trembled as did Olympus with the thunders of Jove—he might have been compared to nitre, very cool when not heated, but when fired, dangerously explosive. *(to be concluded.)*

SELECTED.

THE TRAVELS OF A GUINEA.

THE time of my birth, or rather creation, the learned are not agreed on; it is certain, however, that as I was brought forth in a heathenish country, I never was christened till after my arrival in England, when I was called *Guinea*, from the name of the country which was supposed to be that of my birth. I was immediately put under the care of an eminent banker; and the first use he is said to have made of me, was to send me, with ninety-nine of my fellow-slaves, to a great lawyer, in order to use his endeavours to prevent my fellow-travellers from falling into the hands of the crew who took us prisoners. With this gentleman I continued many months, and he behaved to us more like a father than a guardian; for we were lodged in his best apartment, and he visited us every morning, and caressed us more than he did his children; spread us upon the table, and told us over with the greatest ecstasy. We should, in all probability, have remained longer in this happy situation, had not a mortgage presented itself to him. I then fell into the hands of a young heir; with him I visited all the brothels in town, and one night was transferred with some hundreds more, to a sharper of quality at a noted

gaming-house. With my new master I remained a long time, visiting the best company. I then became the reward of a pimp for having dogged a charming girl of sixteen as far as her mistress', who sold ribands and fans; but I grew too hot for the poor fellow's pocket, who changed me at a public house for a dozen of beer to treat his companions. From the publican I went to a brewer. I fell at last into the hands of one of those gentry who have the peculiar faculty of increasthe weight without enlarging the bulk of any one of the order to which I belong, and had like to have undergone a terrible sweat; but just as the liquor was preparing for the operation, a banker's man rapped at the door with a bill in his hand, and preserved forty of us from a salivation. I then made one of a thousand on a journey, in order to incline the electors of a certain borough to vote according to their consciences. I then fell into the hands of a receiver of taxes, and was conducted with much more money to the treasury; from whence I was dispatched, in company with some bank-notes, to a gentleman who made a great figure at elections and was by him carried to a horse-race. There I often changed masters, and by turns became the property of a country-'squire, a general, a sharper, a bully, and was by the latter given to a country-fellow to prevent a drubbing. By him I was given to a lady of pleasure, and by her to a surgeon, in order to repair some breaches love had made in her constitution. He transferred me to a coachmaker, in part payment for an equipage. The coachmaker was stripped of me and many more at a house of ill fame. I then was sent with a compliment to a justice of the peace, and by him given to a lawyer, to defend him from the consequences of a false imprisonment.

My next stage was to a fishmonger's, from whence I went to a court of justice, and was very instrumental in getting a girl of the town acquitted of a small crime she was charged with. I made several attempts to get upon the bench, but to no purpose; and was obliged to remain with a gentleman of the bar, who sent self and company in a few days, to purchase stock. I then was sent to the bank. Here I remained a long time in prison; but being wanted to forward a public enterprize, 10,000 of us were freed from goal. I was once more carried in triumph to the treasury. After various changes I fell into the hands of a clergyman. Next, by what accident I know not, I became the property of a gentleman who had great influence in a rich parish, who gave me to a carter, by way

of plaister for a broken head he had given him, when he came to interrupt him in his third bottle, by some idle questions about the dunging of a field. The carter, who now thought himself as good a man as his master, gave him warning, and set out for the city; but fooled me, and the whole contents of an old leathern pouch, the reward of two years hard labour, at the next market-town, at a gambling table. I saved my next master from the county-bridewell, by interposing between him and the constable. The constable's lady happened to be in want of some articles of dress, so she gave me to a pedlar, with whom I travelled through most of the market-towns on the continent; and then exchanged me with a gentleman of the roads for a watch he had lately picked up in his travels. He presented me to a chambermaid at an inn, for some little civilities she was kind enough to shew him. She gave me to a stage-coachman, as a reward for some obligations she lay under to him. After a thousand different changes, I fell into the hands of a printer, who sent me to an author for translating a very ingenious French romance into English, and improving upon this little specimen of my history, and swelling it into a three-shilling volume. I shall therefore say no more till the publication of that volume, when, no doubt, I shall have an opportunity of convicting the said author of a thousand forgeries. GUINEA.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

☞THE Editor returns his thanks to his literary friends, for the valuable productions he has received—*The Stranger*, *Alician*, *Glormon*, *Anacharsis*, *&c.* in whose poetical productions, much beauty, and originality of thought are plainly discoverable; and to his Correspondents in *prose* he is not less indebted—Youth is the season when improvement is most easily made, every essay strengthens the mind, fixes some sentiment, and prepares for future action; the exercise is therefore both pleasant and profitable; but the Editor cannot conceal his disapprobation of those unthinking youth, who can have the effrontery to endeavour to impose upon him, the public, and themselves, by sending pieces as *original* which are *not* so: Let *Juventus* know "*Thoughts on the prospect of death*," are found in the Edinburgh Mirror first vol. and his changing and destroying the elegiac beauty of the poem by reducing it from ten syllables in the line to eight, gave him no claim to its merits. As this is the first time we have thought proper to mention this conduct, we trust it will be the last.—Selections will be received and attended to as well as original pieces, no doubt the last will, as they ought, receive the preference, but we will ever despise the jay that would hide his natural form by adorning his body with the feathers pilfered from the peacock. O. OPTIC.

Poetical Department.

ORIGINAL.

THE STANGER's RETURN.

ALL hail! delightful sweet abodes,
Haunts of my youth, as ever, dear;
Groves, streams and hills, I mind ye well,
But how forlorn how sad ye are!

Ah no! 'tis I alone am sad!
Blithe runs the rill thro' yonder grove,
Sweetly meand'ring thro' the hills,
Where I delighted once to rove.

Fresh from their caves the fountains burst,
Unhush'd by time the torrent roars;
Wild rushing thro' the untrack'd woods,
The full, majestic river pours.

The warblers gay as ever, sing,
The flocks around me sportive play;
From tree to tree the squirrel leaps,
The frisking hares are glad and gay.

Alas! 'tis I alone am sad;
The vallies bloom, the hills are green;
But I am old, care-worn and grey,
I weep, to mind what I have been!

Where art thou Echo, babler sweet!
Whose music-mock'ry pleasure gave!
Alas! too weak's my woe-worn voice,
To call thee from thy lonely cave!

Thou unseen tenant of the wood,
O! let me hear thy tender thrill—
The fox will listen in his cave,
The wild deer startle on the hill!

There stands the venerable oak,
Alas! alas! I mind it well!
Beneath its shade I've often sat;
Strange uncooth fairy tales to tell.

There lies the school-house once so gay,
Forsaken, silent and alone!

Where are its sprightly tenants now?—
Are they like it decay'd and gone?

Beneath the mould'ring, mossy heap,
Conceal'd, the tim'rous rabbit lies;
The cattle pluck the long rank grass,
That o'er the mournful ruin sighs.

There stands the melancholy stone,
That marks my dear old father's head!
Close by its side another tells
The spot where low my mother's laid!

Bloom on ye groves, as ever gay,
Ye have no feeling care-worn mind;
Unheeded whistles o'er your heads,
The cold keen snows and wintry wind!

But I, unhappy, weak old man,
Am press'd with unremitting woe!
The pangs of fierce corporeal pain,
And fiercer mental pangs I know!

But stay!—I'm bless'd above ye all!
Ye fall, forgotten to decay,
And sleep in everlasting night—
I fall—to rise in endless day! THE STRANGER.

ORIGINAL.

SMOKING.

LET peasants and women their logic intrude,
To establish that smoking is vulgar and rude;
That it none can amuse save the dunces devoid
Of mental resources to keep them employ'd;
I care not a snuff, look'ee, what they aver,
Still maintaining my ground that I'll smoke my cigar,
In defiance of flirting and frowning and sneering,
And flouncing and pouting and flouting and jeering:—
And thus, to protect me, I form a redoubt—
The world's a mere whimsical kitten throughout,
As rantipole, odd, fond of freaks and of changing,
As e'er was young kit o'er the kitchen floor ranging;
The which being granted, I bring things to bear,
As of whims and of oddities each has his share,
Though some be more wild and eccentric than others,
Let none enjoy their's, who admit not their brother's.

If an impudent coxcomb my button may seize,
And my brain with his idle verbosity teaze,
He must surely allow, that with equal good grace,
I may light my cigar up, and puff in his face.
If sly-looking girls to a corner will slink,
Crack their jokes on the lads, whisper, giggle and wink,
It is well, very well; but they'll grant, I presume,
I may smoke, if so bent, till I darken the room.—
And to-day if my mistress, my patience to bother,
Revolt from her duty, and gad with another,
To-morrow when I, things again being square,
All my sugar-and-milk tales repeat to the fair,
Should I fancy a whiff, and to brave the clouds doom her,
So good, *she had her's*, may not I have *my humour*?
Indeed a cigar might become, the world over,
A weapon of vengeance to ev'ry teazed lover;
But all I would urge, in a breath to combine,
Ev'ry wight has his whim-wham, and smoking is mine:
And the lib'ral revering, I heartily hope,
No nincom or wiseacre under the cope
Will so wickedly crooked be, rude and perverse,
As to say things an't better than if they were worse.

GLORMON.

ORIGINAL.

THOUGHTS,

At a public examination of Mr. you don't know who's pupils.

WHAT others think I cannot say,
But very well I know
That to myself a debt I pay,
In thinking as I go.

'What think you now then,' cries some rogue,
I'll tell you, in a crack,
More ways there are to kill a dog,
Than drowning in a sack.

I think too that when justice reigns,
When raree shows are made,
The puppet mover for his pains,
In ha'pence should be paid.

Which makes *two* thoughts, and who has more,
If light be in the sun,
A long-faced gen'man on this floor,
Has not a thought but *one*.

GLORMON.